



6.0 Alternatives

6.1 Introduction

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) requires the proposed Project identify and evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed Project, which would feasibly achieve the basic objectives of the proposed Project, but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the Project. *CEQA* also requires that a comparative evaluation be done that evaluates the merits of each of the alternatives.

Pursuant to *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 (f)(1), factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives include, but are not limited to, site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, and jurisdictional boundaries. There is no limit on the number of Alternatives that can be presented, however, these factors help to establish and determine the appropriate number of alternatives necessary to ensure public participation and informed decision-making is accomplished throughout the process.

2019 FOCUSED GENERAL PLAN UPDATE PROCESS

In 2009, the City of Murrieta initiated a comprehensive update of the General Plan which was adopted on July 19, 2011 and included a Climate Action Plan. In 2018, the City issued a request for proposals (RFP) to prepare a focused General Plan Update (GPU) of the City's 2011 General Plan, a CAP Update, and the preparation of the SEIR. In 2019, the City augmented the scope of work to include a Zoning Code Update. The "proposed Project" in this SEIR includes a GPU, CAP Update, and Zone Code Amendment. The City of Murrieta's objectives for the proposed Project are as discussed in Section 3.0, Project Description.

Determination of Alternatives to Be Analyzed

The Alternatives discussed in this Section were established by community values, outreach and working with City staff which lead to the creation of an environmental superior alternative and two additional alternatives.



ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS

Potentially significant impacts that would result from implementation of the proposed Project are identified in Section 4.0, New Environmental Analysis. This section considers and compares alternatives to the proposed Project that could either avoid or minimize these impacts. A description of each alternative is provided below, as well as a comparison of the environmental impacts of each alternative in relation to the impacts identified for the proposed Project.

6.2 No Project Alternative

6.2.1 Description

As required by *CEQA Guidelines* Section 15126.6 (e), the No Project Alternative describes buildout of the City of Murrieta in accordance with existing zoning and General Plan land use designations and policies of the current General Plan, General Plan 2035, which was adopted in 2011 (refer to Exhibit 3 -2, Existing General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map). This Alternative assumes that ultimate buildout of the existing Project would occur. The No Project Alternative encompasses the same geographic area as that in the proposed Project.

6.2.2 Impact Evaluation

AESTHETICS

Future development is likely to result on the same land in both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project. The potential future development will result in both short-term and long-term changes to the existing visual character of those areas. However, in both cases, appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures from the adopted General Plan would be followed to ensure that the impact is less than significant. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project may involve the development of land currently used for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the potential impacts to



agricultural land would be similar in both cases; no new or greater impacts are anticipated with the proposed Project. Any future development under either plan would comply with any relevant goals, policies and mitigation measures of the General Plan and with any applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would result in significant unavoidable impacts related to air quality. In both cases, there would be short-term impacts related to construction emissions, and long-term impacts related to operational emissions. There would also be an increase in vehicles to and from the potential future developments, which would contribute to a decrease in air quality in and around the development areas due to vehicle emissions. However, the proposed Project aims to provide a better jobs/housing balance than currently exists in the No Project Alternative which would likely reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT). In this regard, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The No Project Alternative would result in similar land disturbance and increased human activity during future development as the proposed Project. Therefore, it is anticipated that the impacts to biological resources, would be the similar in both cases. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project include goals, policies and mitigation measures to lessen the impacts of the disturbance. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would allow for development on existing vacant land throughout the City. Therefore, potential impacts to known or unknown/undiscovered historical, archaeological, or paleontological resources would be similar or the same under the No Project Alternative or the proposed Project. Additionally, both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project propose goals, policies and mitigation measures protect and preserve significant cultural resources and comply with applicable state and federal laws if cultural resources are unearthed during any future development. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.



ENERGY

Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significant threshold criteria for energy conservation. The certified 2011 EIR analyzed energy conservation but not to the extent that the proposed Project does, based on the new significance thresholds. The proposed Project's land use plan includes a reorganized mix of land uses which will help to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Additionally, the proposed Project incorporates additional policies to further prioritize energy conservation, green building and renewable energy. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Future development is likely to result on the same land in both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project. In both cases, potential new development would expose people and structures to potential geologic and seismic hazards. However, the level of impact would be considered less than significant as new development under both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would adhere to and comply with applicable building codes and standards relating to geology and seismicity. The No Project Alternative would involve less residential units and more non-residential square footage than the proposed Project; however mitigation would remain similar in both cases. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would result in additional GHG emissions with future development. In 2011, the City prepared a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to address GHG emissions reduction within the City. The 2011 CAP includes a variety of strategies, measures, and actions to reduce GHG emissions in accordance with State reduction goals. In accordance with AB 32, the City would be required to reduce GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. As shown in Table 9 of the Draft Tech Memo: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Impact Analysis (Appendix C), after implementation of State, federal, and local actions, the forecasted years for both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project still do not meet the goals to reduce impacts on climate change. Without further action from the City, GHG emission reduction targets for the City would not be met. Although, both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project do not meet these goals, the forecasts for the proposed Project result in less GHG emissions than the No Project Alternative. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.



HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project include non-residential land uses throughout the City of Murrieta. These non-residential uses may involve the storage and/or use of hazardous materials. The No Project Alternative and the proposed Project both provide goals, policies and mitigation measures to ensure that the impacts are less than significant. However, the No Project Alternative would result in more non-residential uses than the proposed Project. Non-residential uses are more likely to involve the storage and use of hazardous materials. Hazardous substance incidents and materials are often associated with transportation and certain businesses such as agricultural businesses. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

The No Project Alternative and the proposed Project will likely result in development of the same land. Although the proposed Project would allow for an increase in residential uses, it would also include a reduction of non-residential uses. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project include goals, policies and mitigation measures to ensure impacts are less than significant. Additionally, all new development would need to comply with Federal, State, and Regional governments and agencies to protect and improve the quality of local and regional groundwater resources to reduce the impacts of water quality and waste discharge. New development resulting from either the No Project Alternative or the proposed Project would be reviewed on a project-by-project basis to ensure that hydrology, drainage and water quality standards were upheld. Therefore, the hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts from potential future development would be similar in both cases. Accordingly, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

LAND USE

An objective of the proposed Project is to modify the organization and location of land use designations in key areas within the City of Murrieta to reflect the vision of the City and respond to the projected development patterns to the year 2035. The No Project Alternative land use designations no longer adequately address the development patterns or the land use vision for the City. There are two key differences between the No Project Alternative Land Use Policy Map and the proposed Project Land Use Policy Map. Firstly, the proposed Project identifies six (6) key areas where the change of land use is necessary to accommodate future development patterns and projections. The proposed Project anticipates an increase in dwelling units by 1,572 and a decrease in non-residential uses by 2,405,601 square feet from what was estimated in the No Project Alternative. Secondly, the proposed Project revises and updates the existing



Land Use Element, including establishing a new land use designation, Innovation, which responds to changes in development patterns over time and allows greater flexibility and variety in the types of non-residential development. The changes to the Land Use Element in the proposed Project helps to create a better jobs/housing ratio in response to development patterns in the City, compared to the No Project Alternative, while still achieving the City's goals in terms of economic development. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Future development under both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would likely be on the same land. Therefore, the potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar in both cases as no new resources have been identified. In both cases, future development would be required to comply with any applicable federal, state or local laws or regulations regarding mineral resources and therefore impacts would be less than significant. Therefore the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

NOISE

The No Project Alternative would result in less residential development and more non-residential development than the proposed Project. In both cases, there would be unavoidable short-term and long-term noise impacts related to construction noise, operational noise and traffic associated noise impacts with the development regardless of the type of land use. These noise impacts would be reduced through adherence to the goals, policies and mitigation measures in the proposed Project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally neither superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT

The No Project Alternative no longer responds to the current population and development projections to the year 2035. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project provide non-residential uses that respond to and reflect the City of Murrieta's goals and priorities in terms of economic development and employment opportunities. However, the proposed Project allows for more residential development than the No Project Alternative and in turn creates a more desirable jobs/housing balance, while still achieving the City's economic goals. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES



Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project would allow for development of land for both residential and non-residential land uses, which would result in an increased demand on public services and utilities. Both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project provide goals, policies and mitigation measures to ensure that impacts are less than significant; however there are still some significant impacts in terms of parks and recreational facilities that are unavoidable. The No Project Alternative would allow for less residential units and more non-residential square footage than the proposed Project. The proposed Project allows for an additional 1,572 dwelling units and the increase in residential units would likely increase demand for public services; in particular, park resources, recreational facilities and school facilities. Therefore, the level of service and demand for service would likely be less with the No Project Alternative than the proposed Project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally superior to the proposed Project in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Although the No Project Alternative provides goals and policies to support and encourage alternative modes of transportation, it does not do so to the extent of the proposed Project. Additionally, the proposed Project aims to create a better jobs/housing ratio which would assist in decreasing traffic congestion and lowering VMT. Therefore, since the number of deficient intersections would be less with the proposed Project, fewer impacts would occur under the proposed Project when compared to the No Project Alternative. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Future development resulting from the implementation of both the No Project Alternative and the proposed Project may result on the same land and have the potential to impact or affect cultural resources. These potential development projects would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In both cases, any future development would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, as well as any relevant General Plan goals, policies, and mitigation measures. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

WILDFIRE

Development resulting from the implementation of either the No Project Alternative or the proposed Project would result on the same land and could be exposed to wildfire risks. Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significance threshold criteria for wildfire threat. The certified 2011 EIR analyzed fire protection but not to the extent that the proposed



Project does, based on the new significance thresholds. The proposed Project provides policies that address wildfire risks and encourages continued consideration of the impacts to wildfire services. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CONCLUSION

The No Project Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed Project for aesthetics, agricultural resources, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and seismic hazard, hydrology, drainage and water quality, mineral resources, noise, and tribal cultural resources. However, the No Project Alternative may generate higher impacts than the proposed Project with respect to air quality, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, land use, population, housing and employment, traffic and circulation, and wildfire. The No Project Alternative would generate fewer impacts than the proposed Project with respect to public services and utilities. The goal of the proposed Project is to provide updated information on conditions in the City, as well as respond to the goals and visions of the City. Although the No Project Alternative would result in many similar environmental impacts as the proposed Project, it does not address development patterns, future projections or provide updated land use plans to the extent that the proposed Project does. Based on the environmental impacts above and comparison with the proposed Project, the No Project Alternative would not serve the City of Murrieta as effectively as the proposed Project. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

6.3 Alternative 2

6.3.1 Description

Alternative 2 assumes that the proposed Project, including all goals and policies would be adopted; however, the land use designations in Area 4, identified on the General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map, Alternative 2 (*refer to Exhibit 6-1*) would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage when compared to the proposed Project (*refer to Exhibit 3-3, General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map in Section 3.0 Project Description*). As such, citywide growth would be the same for both the Alternative 2 and the proposed Project outside of Area 4.

When compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 2 includes the same mix of land use designations but in different quantities and location within Area 4 and would result in approximately 57.2 more acres of residential uses and approximately 57.2 fewer acres non-residential uses.



6.3.2 Impact Evaluation

AESTHETICS

Alternative 2 would allow for more multi-family residential units in Area 4, compared to the proposed Project. In both cases, potential future development of this area would result in both short-term and long-term changes to the existing visual character of the area. However, appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures from the adopted General Plan would be followed to ensure that the impact is less than significant. Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed GPU in this regard.

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project may involve the development of land currently used for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the potential impacts to agricultural resources would be similar in both cases. The potential impacts would be considered less than significant in both the Alternative 2 and the proposed Project by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. Therefore, the Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would allow the development of land uses that would create significant unavoidable impacts related to air quality. In both cases, there would be short-term impacts related to construction emissions, and long-term impacts related to operational emissions. Alternative 2 would allow for an increase of multiple-family residential development, an increase in residential development would likely increase the number of vehicular trips made therefore would contribute to a decrease in air quality due to vehicle emissions. However, in both cases the air quality impacts associated with future development can be mitigated to less than significant levels through adherence to Federal, State and Local regulations as well as the use of goals and policies in the adopted General Plan. In this regard, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project.



BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project have the potential to disturb biological resources due to development of vacant land and the resulting increase in human activity. Therefore impacts to biological resources, either direct species impacts or habitat modifications would be similar between Alternative 2 and the proposed Project. In both cases, it is anticipated that the impacts would be mitigated to less than significant by following appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project to protect these biological resources. Therefore, the Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would result in the potential disturbance of historical, archeological, or paleontological resources. Any new development in the City could potentially unearth a cultural artifact and therefore the potential impacts to cultural resources would be similar between Alternative 2 and the proposed Project. However, in both cases, impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant by following appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures identified in the proposed Project to protect these resources. Therefore, the Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

ENERGY

Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significance threshold criteria for energy conservation. Both the Alternative 2 Scenario and the proposed Project propose land use plans that include a reorganized mix of land uses which will help to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Additionally, the proposed Project incorporates additional policies to further prioritize energy conservation, green building and renewable energy. Therefore, the Alternative 2 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would allow for new development that would create both residential and non-residential land uses. Alternative 2 would allow for more residential development, and less non-residential development than the proposed Project. However, in both cases, new development would increase the number of people and structures that could potentially be impacted by seismic activity. Therefore, the potential impacts by seismic activity would be similar between Alternative



2 and the proposed Project. The impacts associated with seismic activity could be reduced by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures of the proposed Project as well as adhering to applicable building codes. Therefore, Alternative 2 is neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Similarly to the proposed Project, future development pursuant to the Alternative 2 would result in additional GHG emissions. After implementation of State, federal, and local actions, the forecasted years for the proposed Project do not meet the goals to reduce impacts on climate change. Alternative 2 would likely result in similar GHG emissions; therefore as identified for the proposed Project, without further action from the City, GHG emission reduction targets would not be met. Thus, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would allow for the development of residential uses and non-residential uses in close proximity to each other. These non-residential uses could potentially store and/or use hazardous materials. In both cases, the risks of these hazardous materials could be mitigated by implementing and following the goals, policies and mitigation measures in the proposed Project. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

Alternative 2 and the proposed Project will likely result in development of the same land. The Alternative 2 would allow for an increase in residential uses, however, it would also include a reduction in non-residential uses. Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project include goals, policies and mitigation measures to ensure impacts are less than significant. Additionally, all new development would need to comply with Federal, State, and Regional governments and agencies to protect and improve the quality of local and regional groundwater resources reduce the impacts of water quality and waste discharge. New development resulting from the either the Alternative 2 or the proposed Project would also be reviewed on a project-by-project bases to ensure that hydrology, drainage and water quality standards were upheld. Therefore, the hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts from potential future development would be similar in both cases. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.



LAND USE

The Alternative 2 revises and updates the existing Land Use Element, similarly to the proposed Project. The Alternative 2 would involve changes to the land use designations within Area 4 as discussed above. Specifically, Alternative 2 allows for additional Multiple-Family Residential uses and less non-residential land uses compared to the proposed Project. However, these land use changes would continue to provide consistent and compatible development within the City. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project may involve the development of land that contains mineral resources. Therefore, the potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar in both cases. The potential impacts would be considered less than significant in both Alternative 2 and the Project by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. Therefore, the Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

NOISE

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project propose the development of land throughout the City of Murrieta. In both cases, new development would result in additional short-term noise impacts from construction, as well as long-term noise impacts from operational noise and an increase in traffic. These long-term noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable in both cases as the City grows and new development occurs. Therefore Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would respond to future population and development projections to the year 2035. Although Alternative 2 responds to the residential development patterns in the City, it does not provide the amount of non-residential development needed to achieve the goals and vision of the City in terms of economic development to the extent of the proposed Project. Therefore the Alternative 2 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Both Alternative 2 and the proposed Project would allow for new development



throughout the City, which would result in an increased demand for public services and utilities. In both cases, the impacts to public services and utilities would be considered less than significant by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. However, Alternative 2 would allow for an increase in residential development, in particular multiple-family residential. Due to the density of this land use, this would likely result in an increase in population in the area and in turn a higher demand on parks and recreational facilities, as well as school facilities. Therefore the Alternative 2 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The land use plan for Alternative 2 would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage within Area 4. Based on the similar land use plans and development potential identified for Alternative 2, it is anticipated that similar roadway and intersection impacts would occur. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Future development resulting from the implementation of both the Alternative 2 Scenario and the proposed Project may result on the same land and have the potential to impact or affect cultural resources. These potential development projects would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In both cases, any future development would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, as well as any relevant General Plan goals, policies, and mitigation measures. Therefore, the Alternative 2 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

WILDFIRE

Development resulting from the implementation of either the Alternative 2 Scenario or the proposed Project would result on the same land and could be exposed to wildfire risks. Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significance threshold criteria for wildfire threat. Similarly to the proposed Project, the Alternative 2 Scenario provides policies that address wildfire risks and encourages continued consideration of the impacts to wildfire services. Therefore, the Alternative 2 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CONCLUSION

Alternative 2 would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed Project for aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources,



energy, geology and seismic hazards, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology, drainage and water quality, land use, mineral resources, noise, traffic and circulation, tribal cultural resources, and wildfire. However, this Alternative may generate higher impacts than the proposed Project with respect to population, housing and employment, and public services and utilities. Therefore, Alternative 2 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

6.4 Alternative 3 Scenario

6.4.1 Description

Alternative 3 assumes that the proposed Project, including all goals and policies would be adopted; however, the land use designations in Area 4, identified on the General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map, Alternative 3 (*refer to Exhibit 6-2*) would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage when compared to the proposed Project (*refer to Exhibit 3-3, General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map*). As such, citywide growth would be the same for both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project outside of Area 4. When compared to the proposed Project, Alternative 3 includes the same mix of land use designations but in different quantities and location within Area 4 with the exception of additional commercial land uses. Alternative 3 would result in approximately 64.6 more acres of residential uses and approximately 64.6 fewer acres non-residential uses.

6.4.2 Impact Evaluation

AESTHETICS

Alternative 3 would allow for more residential and commercial uses, compared to the proposed Project. In both cases, potential future development of this area would result in both short-term and long-term changes to the existing visual character of the area. However, appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures from the proposed GPU would be followed to ensure that the impact is less than significant. Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would encourage preservation of existing residential neighborhoods within the City. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.



AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project may involve the development of land currently used for agricultural purposes. Therefore, the potential impacts to agricultural resources would be similar in both cases. The potential impacts would be considered less than significant in both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. Therefore, the Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

AIR QUALITY

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would allow the development of land uses that would create significant unavoidable impacts related to air quality. In both cases, there would be short-term impacts related to construction emissions, and long-term impacts related to operational emissions. Alternative 3 would allow for an increase of multiple-family residential development, an increase in residential development would likely increase the number of vehicular trips made therefore would contribute to a decrease in air quality due to vehicle emissions. However, in both cases the air quality impacts associated with future development can be mitigated to less than significant levels through adherence to Federal, State and Local regulations as well as the use of goals and policies in the adopted General Plan. In this regard, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project have the potential to disturb biological resources due to development of vacant land and the resulting increase in human activity. Therefore impacts to biological resources, either direct species impacts or habitat modifications would be similar between Alternative 3 and the proposed Project. In both cases, it is anticipated that the impacts would be mitigated to less than significant by following appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project to protect these biological resources. Therefore, the Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would result in the potential disturbance of historical, archeological, or paleontological resources. Any new development in the City could potentially unearth a cultural artifact and therefore the potential impacts to cultural resources would be similar between Alternative 3 and the proposed Project. However,



in both cases, impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant by following appropriate goals, policies and mitigation measures identified in the proposed Project to protect these resources. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

ENERGY

Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significance threshold criteria for energy conservation. Both the Alternative 3 Scenario and the proposed Project propose land use plans that include a reorganized mix of land uses which will help to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Additionally, the proposed Project incorporates additional policies to further prioritize energy conservation, green building and renewable energy. Therefore, the Alternative 3 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GEOLOGY AND SEISMIC HAZARDS

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would allow for new development that would create both residential and non-residential land uses. Alternative 3 would allow for more residential development, and less non-residential development than the proposed Project. However, in both cases, new development would increase the number of people and structures that could potentially be impacted by seismic activity. Therefore, the potential impacts by seismic activity would be similar between Alternative 3 and the proposed Project. The impacts associated with seismic activity could be reduced by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures of the proposed Project as well as adhering to applicable building codes. Therefore, Alternative 3 is neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Similarly to the proposed Project, future development pursuant to Alternative 3 would result in additional GHG emissions. After implementation of State, federal, and local actions, the forecasted years for the proposed Project do not meet the goals to reduce impacts on climate change. Alternative 3 would likely result in similar GHG emissions; therefore as identified for the proposed Project, without further action from the City, GHG emission reduction targets would not be met. Thus, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would allow for the development of



residential uses and non-residential uses in close proximity to each other. These non-residential uses could potentially store and/or use hazardous materials. In both cases, the risks of these hazardous materials could be mitigated by implementing and following the goals, policies and mitigation measures in the proposed Project. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

HYDROLOGY, DRAINAGE, AND WATER QUALITY

Alternative 3 and the proposed Project will likely result in development of the same land. The Alternative 3 would allow for an increase in residential uses, however, it would also include a reduction in non-residential uses. Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project include goals, policies and mitigation measures to ensure impacts are less than significant. Additionally, all new development would need to comply with Federal, State, and Regional governments and agencies to protect and improve the quality of local and regional groundwater resources reduce the impacts of water quality and waste discharge. New development resulting from the either the Alternative 3 or the proposed Project would also be reviewed on a project-by-project bases to ensure that hydrology, drainage and water quality standards were upheld. Therefore, the hydrology, drainage, or water quality impacts from potential future development would be similar in both cases. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

LAND USE

Alternative 3 revises and updates the existing Land Use Element, similarly to the proposed Project. Alternative 3 would involve changes to the land use designations within Area 4 as discussed above. These land use changes would continue to provide consistent and compatible development within the City. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project may involve the development of land that contains mineral resources. Therefore, the potential impacts to mineral resources would be similar in both cases. The potential impacts would be considered less than significant in both Alternative 3 and the Project by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. Therefore, the Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.



NOISE

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project propose the development of land throughout the City of Murrieta. In both cases, new development would result in additional short-term noise impacts from construction, as well as long-term noise impacts from operational noise and an increase in traffic. These long-term noise impacts would be significant and unavoidable in both cases as the City grows and new development occurs. Therefore Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project.

POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would respond to future population and development projections to the year 2035. Although Alternative 3 responds to the residential development patterns in the City, it does not provide the amount of non-residential development needed to achieve the goals and vision of the City in terms of economic development to the extent of the proposed Project. Therefore the Alternative 3 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

Both Alternative 3 and the proposed Project would allow for new development throughout the City, which would result in an increased demand for public services and utilities. In both cases, the impacts to public services and utilities would be considered less than significant by following the goals, policies and mitigation measures outlined in the proposed Project. However, Alternative 3 would allow for an increase in residential development. Due to the density of this land use, this would likely result in an increase in population in the area and in turn a higher demand on parks and recreational facilities, as well as school facilities. Therefore the Alternative 3 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

The land use plan for Alternative 3 would provide for greater residential dwelling units and less non-residential square footage within Area 4. Based on the similar land use plans and development potential identified for Alternative 3, it is anticipated that similar roadway and intersection impacts would occur. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES



Future development resulting from the implementation of both the Alternative 3 Scenario and the proposed Project may result on the same land and have the potential to impact or affect cultural resources. These potential development projects would need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In both cases, any future development would be required to comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations, as well as any relevant General Plan goals, policies, and mitigation measures. Therefore, the Alternative 3 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

WILDFIRE

Development resulting from the implementation of either the Alternative 3 Scenario or the proposed Project would result on the same land and could be exposed to wildfire risks. Since the adoption of the 2011 certified EIR, Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines has been revised to include significance threshold criteria for wildfire threat. Similarly to the proposed Project, the Alternative 3 Scenario provides policies that address wildfire risks and encourages continued consideration of the impacts to wildfire services. Therefore, the Alternative 3 Scenario is considered neither environmentally superior nor inferior to the proposed Project in this regard.

CONCLUSION

Alternative 3 would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed Project for aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, energy, geology and seismic hazards, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology, drainage and water quality, land use, mineral resources, noise, traffic and circulation, tribal cultural resources, and wildfire. However, this Alternative may generate higher impacts than the proposed Project with respect to population, housing and employment, and public services and utilities. Therefore, Alternative 3 is considered environmentally inferior to the proposed Project.

6.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

CEQA requires that an “Environmentally Superior Alternative” be identified among those considered; that is an alternative that would result in the fewest or least significant environmental impacts. The environmentally superior alternative is determined based on the consideration of which alternative fulfills the project objective, while also reducing the significant, unavoidable impacts on the surrounding environment.

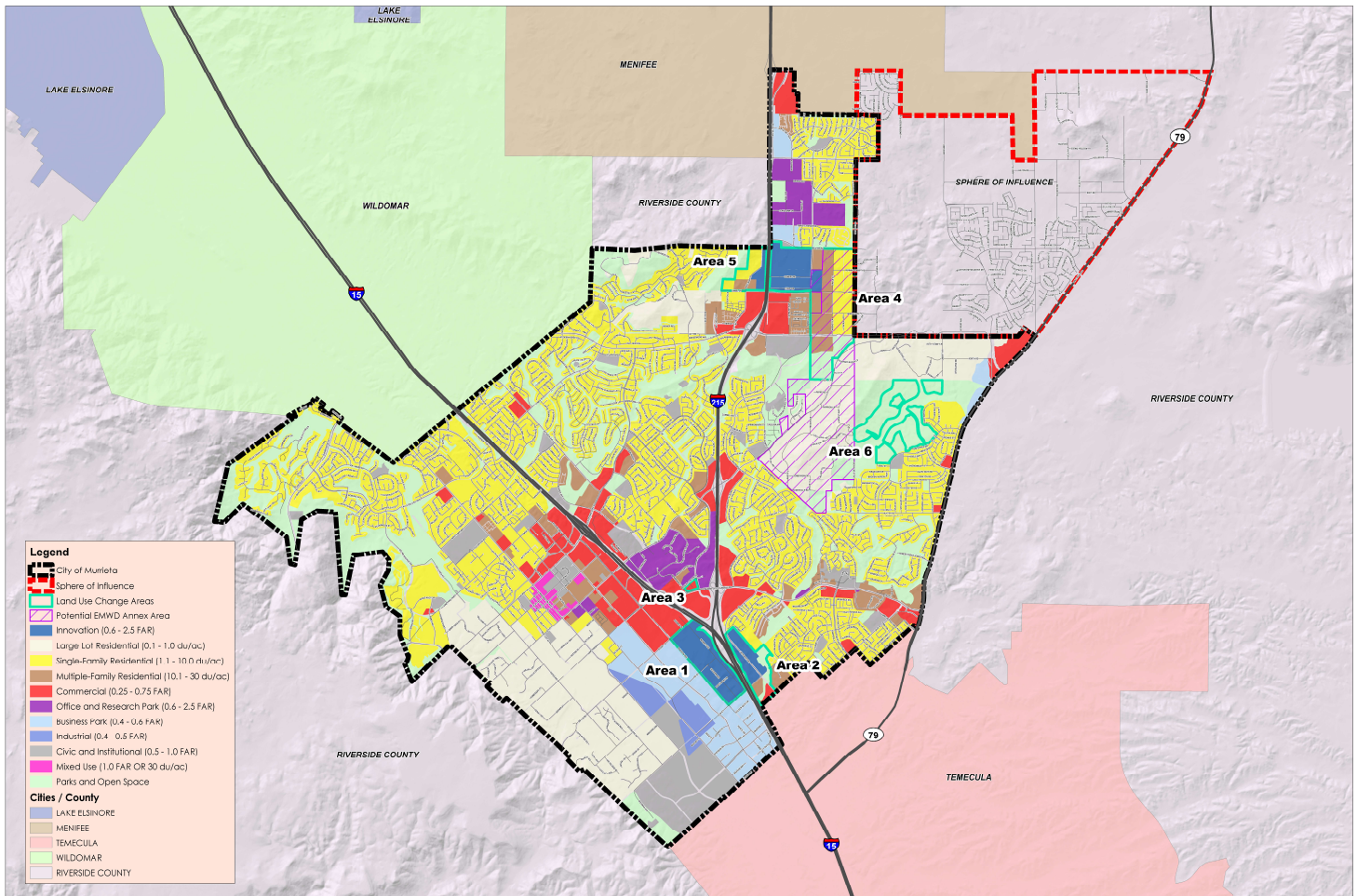
NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE



Overall, the No Project Alternative would result in similar environmental impacts as the proposed Project except in terms of air quality, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, land use, population, housing and employment, traffic and circulation, and wildfire, which would be considered inferior. The No Project Alternative would be considered environmentally superior in regards to public services and utilities; however, the No Project Alternative does not reduce the significant unavoidable impacts to the environment to the extent that the proposed Project does. Additionally, the No Project Alternative would not address changes in State law enacted since the adoption of the 2011 General Plan. Therefore, the No Project Alternative is not selected as the environmentally superior alternative to the proposed Project.

ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 3 AND THE PROPOSED PROJECT

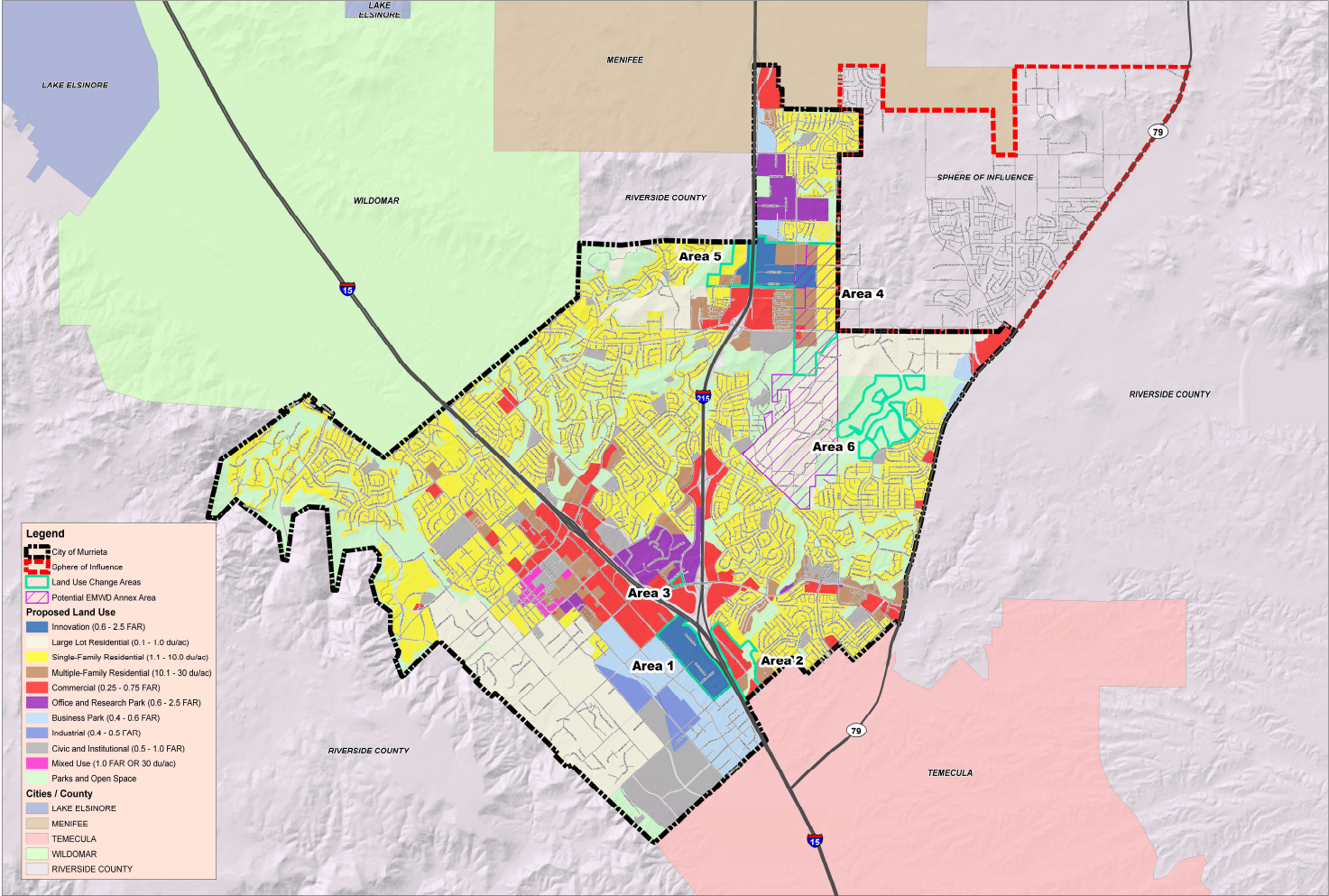
Alternatives 2 and 3 allow for greater residential development and less non-residential development than the proposed Project. This increase in residential development could result in additional impacts to population, housing and employment, and public services and utilities beyond those identified by the Proposed Project. However, the land use components of Alternatives 2 and 3 are very similar overall to the Proposed Project and the differences in impacts would be minimal. As such, the Environmentally Superior Alternative is the proposed Project; however, as discussed, Alternatives 2 and 3 would be very similar overall to the proposed Project.



General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map - Alternative 2

Exhibit 6-1





General Plan 2035 Land Use Policy Map - Alternative 3

Exhibit 6.2

